

PHOENIX HILL

Phoenix Hill is one of Louisville's oldest neighborhoods. Land subdivision began around 1835 when the area was known as "Uptown." Development came to a close by the turn of the century, but nearly every style of nineteenth century architecture is represented in this district. Rare examples of antebellum residences are located here, many with an architectural feature called a "dog trot," a passage through the building but not into it. Only in Butcher-town and Phoenix Hill is this feature found.

Phoenix Hill was largely populated by working-class German and Irish immigrants. The architecture which remains reflects the social and ethnic origins of its early population. The ethnic heritage of the neighborhood can best be seen through the churches which were established by the German and Irish residents.

The residential architecture in Phoenix Hill spans nearly a century with some examples as early as 1840. These are some of the earliest residential examples which remain in the inner city. The period between 1870 and 1890 appears to be the most prolific residential building period. Generally, the housing stock was built for lower- to middle-income families, and is therefore modest in size. Even where the Italianate and Victorian styles are used, the residences are generally considered modest on a city-wide comparison.

The two major commercial hubs in Phoenix Hill, Market Street and East Broadway, both contain fine collections of Victorian commercial architecture. It is on Market Street that most of the redevelopment is occurring. New specialty shops, businesses and offices are gradually opening. The recent renovation of the Hiram Roberts School for use by a nationally known

antiques dealer and the conversion of the Abell Elevator Building on Main Street in the same square block for residential use, have been stimulants to development in the area. East Broadway has not yet had the attention it deserves by developers, but it contains some of the most outstanding buildings in the district.

Phoenix Hill is a neighborhood receiving considerable attention. Phoenix Place is a multi-million dollar residential complex, whose first phase covers three city blocks, with a second phase in the design development stage. The two and three-story brick apartment buildings were designed to compliment the existing brick, late Federal residential and corner commercial buildings. This is the largest new residential development in urban Louisville in many years. The units are 80 percent market rate and 20 percent low-to-moderate-income housing. This \$11 million project was supported by the City through adoption of an Urban Renewal Plan, obtaining an Urban Development Action Grant, and support of industrial revenue bonds.

The renovation of Clarksdale has further enhanced Phoenix Hill. Clarksdale is a 1930s public housing project which is being totally renovated and will continue to be used as public housing.

Phoenix Hill offers an excellent opportunity to developers. The investment tax credits available for substantial rehabilitation, coupled with existing activity by both the private and public sectors and the area's close proximity to the central business district and the proposed riverfront development, create an environment highly conducive for profitable development.



These commercial buildings lining Market Street are characteristic of the 1870s when ground-floor businesses were topped by living space.



A row of identical, paired camelback shotgun houses illustrates the cohesive nature of architecture in Phoenix Hill.

